The NEW PLAYS

Nance O'Neil Mopes Through Most of "Agnes"

BY CHARLES DARNTON.

MISS NANCE O'NEIL, who is making herself miserable in "Agnes" at the Majestic Theatre, has returned to town with a new shade of hair and a company that is several shades better than others that have been enrolled under her banner. It takes you some time to get used to her hair, and an act or more to get used to her play, but the conviction finally settles upon you that both are interesting.

Some mysterious melancholy must be inherent in the name Agnes to bring it about that every character that bears it is as dank as seaweed and as doleful as the dumps. But in spite of the fact that "Agnes" is a "demd, damp, moist" play, and the further fact that Miss O'Neil mopes through most of it without once really rousing the power that is in her, people who delight in looking for trouble at the theatre will doubtless rejoice at what the third petticoated playwright of the week has arranged for their entertainment.

Nance O'Neil as Agnes.

George Cameron appears in print as the author, but scratch "George Cameron" and you will find Mrs. Sydney Drew, the eldest daughter of McKee Rankin, who is still directing Miss O'Neil's zigzag course toward fame. While "Agnes" is far from being perfect, it has the distinction at least of being the best play of the week.

Who but a woman would dream of enveloping a honeymoon in a fog? Agnes is all at sea, and Geoffrey Marshe is half-seas over when you find them aboard a yacht in their dinner clothes. She has married the wealthy owner of the yacht because her mother needs the money, but she isn't paying any kisses on account, and when the boozy husband tries to collect one the lights go out and the chandelier is supposed to hit him on the head. The yacht has been run down, and although Agnes tries to pull her husband on deck, the job is too much for her.

So far you can't quite see through the fog, yet Miss O'Neil, Mr. Cuyler Hastings as the husband, and Mrs. Adeline Stanhope Wheatcroft as the worldly mother, have given you three interesting character studies. You have also had the pleasure of meeting Miss Grace Goodall, an actress with an unusual personality, who knows how to get something more than smoke out of a cigarette. And so you have already formed a good opinion of Miss O'Neil's company.

This opinion grows in the second act as you watch Mr. Percy Ames develop the well-drawn character of an English idler. His work alone is well worth a visit to the Majestic. An Englishman himself, Mr. Ames knows what he is doing in the role of Harry Crutchly, and he does it exceptionally well.

Crutchly comes to cheer up Agnes—a hopeless task—and when he takes his leave, after failing to interest her in his glowing account of his friend, Dr. Brent, an American surgeon celebrated as a brain mechanic, Agnes begins to go through her dead mother's trunk, duly delivered at her door by an expressman. Here she finds letters from Loring Brent, her former lover, that give her mother's memory an extra black eye and reveal to her that she and Brent had been croolly separated. At this very moment a servant brings in Brent's card. Brent is no sooner over the threshold than he harks back to his interrupted love story. The old letters are handed to him in explanation. He opens his arms and Agnes weeps on his shoulder. It is like turning back to the pages of a story paper long laid aside.

Robert Drouet as Loring Brent.

But now the play begins to tighten. Five years later Agnes, in a pink evening gown and with a baby and new mahogany furniture, is the wife of Dr. Brent. She threatens to be happy for a change, but a moment later you realize that she wants little here below to make her grieve again. When the mysterious case of a Frenchman is brought to her attention she is ready and primed for more trouble. M. De La Mer, as the author obviously calls the gentleman who was born of the sea, is really "a case" in the medical sense. Fished out of the sea five years before, he has no memory of his life before that time. A blow has knocked it all out of his head.

As soon as she sees the Frenchman—and Mr. Hastings gives a very good imitation of one—Agnes recognizes him as her seagoing husband. When the doctor is called away she tries to persuade the visitor against an operation to restore his memory, arguing that his past might disturb the equanimity of his present. Her tactless insistence begins to breed suspicion in the man's mind, and he goes away more determined than ever, leaving the despairing Agnes to cry, "What am I going to do?"

Mr. Robert Drouet performs the varied duties of the surgeon satisfactorily, and deserves to be forgiven for the yell of pain from the operating room that adds to the joy of the last act. Miss O'Neil's performance grows better toward the end, but like the play, it has no high lights.

"Agnes" is an old-fashioned play with a new-fashioned ending. It is almost as old-fashioned as tears.

Even So

By Rea Irvin

The Spot-Light Talker of the Little Mind

By Lilian Bell.

DID you ever meet a man who had carved a reputation for cleverness out of rather unpromising material, when the company he found himself in were all gifted with conversational ability above the ordinary?

Did you ever watch such a man sit and suffer because he was obliged to see the spotlight glance hither and yon, and no matter how eagerly he clutched at it as it went by it persisted in flashing from face to face of a brilliant company and absolutely refusing to adorn his alabaster brow alone?

I have. And his agony often brings real drops of sweat to aforesaid brow.

It sometimes takes on the nature of a calamity for a man to feel that he alone is clever. Especially in New York—that Mecca to which all brains bred in circumscribed environments would hie. Nevertheless, just as you will see, in an age which boasts the birth of airships, horse cars in New York, so you often meet a man who feels that the stories which brought stitches in the sides of admirers "back home" will cause equal delight to those progressive individuals to whom good stories of yesterday sound stale to-day.

There are men and women in this world of ours who are so lazy they would rather sit still and be amused than be accounted the most brilliant of talkers if it involved much mental work.

There are others so generous that they play the game of give and take in conversation, which good breeding perhaps makes imperative.

Then, in a class all by himself, stands the spotlight talker of the little mind.

He meets others, not to learn nor as a contributor, but to absorb. If wit in others flashes naturaly, he either fidgets, becomes personal or relapses into sulky silence.

If good stories are the order of the day he never listens to those others tell. He sits racking his brain for one which will cause a roar, no matter what the subject. His cleverness is never utilized co-operatively in conversation. He forms a trust all by himself—in monologue.

Which is a pitiable sight. For he is too self-absorbed to realize how he must appear either to those who play the game squarely or who sit back and see how the others play it.

The onlooker in life's game often has quite a little quiet fun all to himself which the human patrons and players reck not of.

The type of man who is most annoying to those who indulge in the now almost extinct art of conversation is the man who will not permit others to talk seriously on any subject.

If the subjects under discussion were beyond his depth one would understand his chagrin and forgive his ricald interruptions. But not infrequently he is quite capable of joining or even adding to the fund of information.

However, he is known in his small circle as a wit. Therefore he stands with open mouth, ready to trip you up, make a silly pun, refer to a story, twist your meaning, draw a laugh where you were most serious, make you ridiculous when your words were impressive—in other words, make a sincere and complete nuisance of himself to every one in the room—

Except those who never want to talk sense themselves nor listen to it in others.

Which is conversation as it is understood in New York.

The man with a reputation for cleverness is indigenous to its evils.

Betty Vincent Gives Advice On Courtship and Marriage

Does He Love Her?

Dear Betty:

I AM acquainted with a young man and I love him more than I could ever think of loving any one else. I think he cares for me. How can I find out if he does? A. C.

You cannot find out definitely if the young man loves you until he declares himself. However, actions speak louder than words and by his attitude you should be able to judge the depth of his affection. Do not let him see that you are too anxious for his affection.

A Friend Only.

Dear Betty:

I HAVE been calling on a young lady once a week for the last six months. I have only a friendly feeling for her, but she seems to think a great deal of me. I am afraid if I keep on calling she may come to like me too much. I do not like to give her up entirely, as she belongs to the same club as I do, but would like to let her know that I care for her only as a girl friend and companion. I would not like her chances with other young men spoiled on my account. Can you help me? C. Y.

If you are only a friend of the young lady's don't call as often as once a week; once every two or three weeks is sufficient. By your attitude toward her she will learn that you have only a friendly feeling for her. Also encourage her friendship with other men and treat her in a brotherly fashion.

Unfairly Treated.

Dear Betty:

I AM twenty and have been going with a young lady of about the same age for the past year or so. Until lately she has been very sociable and returned my affections sincerely. I made an engagement with her for the coming Sunday, and on leaving her last evening reminded her of the engagement. She said that she had received a letter from another friend of hers, whom she had not seen for some time, stating he would meet her Sunday evening. For this reason she couldn't see me, even though I had previously purchased seats for an entertainment. Do you think I should keep showing attention to this young lady? I like her very much, but don't believe I was treated fairly. B. P.

The young lady has treated you most unfairly. She evidently is too sure of your affection and for that reason takes advantage of you. Treat her coolly for a while until she realizes that she has made a mistake in ignoring her engagements with you.

Religious Differences.

Dear Betty:

MET a young lady about six weeks ago and have learned to love her very much. Recently she told me that her mother told her she could not have me on account of a difference in our religion. She feels very badly about it and so do I. Do you think that this difference in religion should cause our separation? I never could learn to love any other girl and if I should have to leave this dear friend it would break my heart. If we were to get married do you think it would cause any trouble or unhappiness in the future? She does not want to give me up under any circumstances, neither do I want to give her up. F. H. J. V.

If you are both of a marriageable age—that is, twenty-four or five—and are capable of judging whether or not your love is of the true and lasting kind, marry the girl after you have known her for six months or more. Parental objections based solely upon religious differences should not be a bar to your matrimonial happiness, for two sensible persons who love each other can live happily together despite different religious beliefs.

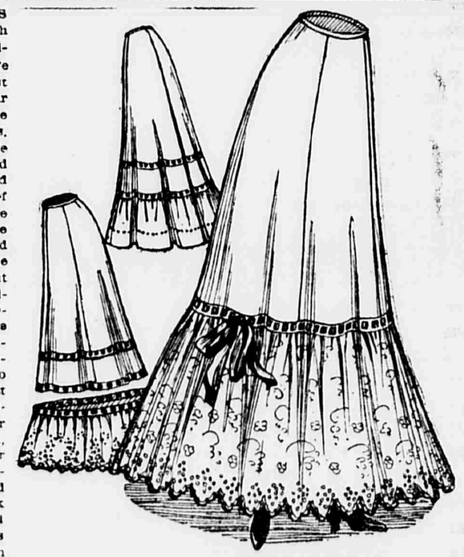
An Introduction Needed.

Dear Betty:

I MEET a young lady every morning on my way to work and would like to become acquainted with her very much, as she bestows such sweet smiles on me that she has won my heart. I am a stranger in the neighborhood and have no friends at all, so therefore cannot get acquainted with her. Do you think it would be proper for me to speak to her without an introduction? B. B.

You must secure a proper introduction to the young lady. Can you not discover where she works and make the acquaintance of some one in her office? She would probably resent it if you spoke to her without meeting her in a proper way.

May Manton's Daily Fashions.



Sheath Petticoat with Adjustable Flounce—Pattern No. 6105.

PETTICOATS made with separate adjustable flounces are among the latest fads of the hour and they serve many practical ends. This one is made with a five gored upper portion and allows a choice of two widths. In the illustration batiste and embroidered flouncing are the materials used, but one of the great advantages of the separate flounce is the ability to use several with one foundation and also to use a somewhat more sturdy material for the lower portion of the skirt, while the upper part is of something thinner and close fitting. Silk and, indeed, all skirting materials are appropriate, with the flounce made either to match or in contrast.

The quantity of material required for the medium size is 4 1-8 yards 21 or **24**, 2 1-2 yards 36 or 2 yards 44 inches wide; the wide flounce will require 4 yards of embroidery 16 inches wide, the narrow flounce 4 yards 10 inches wide or 2 1-4 yards of material 21 or 24, 1 5-8 yards 36, 1 yard 44 inches wide to make as illustrated in the back view.

Pattern No. 6105 is cut in sizes for a 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32 inch waist measure.

How to Obtain These Patterns. Call or send by mail to THE EVENING WORLD MAY MANTON FASHION BUREAU, No. 132 East Twenty-third street, New York. Send 10 cents in coin or stamps for each pattern ordered. IMPORTANT—Write your name and address plainly, and always specify size wanted.

Romantic Rhoda

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO HER

By Ethel Lloyd Patterson

ROMANTIC RHODA thought that she
A working girl would like to be,
And earn her bread
And board and bed,
And sally forth the world to see.

So to her boudoir Rhoda flew,
Picked out the smartest gown she knew,
And silken hose
And furbelows,
All of the latest Paris hue.

With dainty tread she took her way
To a lawyer's office on Broadway.
"Good sir," she said
With tilted head,
"I'll work for you for moderate pay."

This lawyer was a surly cur,
He said, and boldly stared at her,
"I wish to state
That a fashion plate
Is seldom a good stenographer!"

A Revelation of New York Society

THE YOUNGER SET

By Robert W. Chambers,

Author of "The Firing Line" and "A Fighting Chance."

SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS INSTALMENTS.

Capt. Philip Selwyn, of an old New York family, has resigned from the army because his wife, Alixe, divorced him to marry Jack Ruthven, a cotillon leader. Returning to New York, Selwyn frequently meets the Ruthvens. Alixe still secretly loves him. Ruthven is luring young Gerald Erroll to gamble at his house. Selwyn begs Alixe to prevent this for the sake of Gerald's sister, Eileen. Eileen is the ward of Selwyn's brother-in-law, Austin Gerard. Nina Gerard, Selwyn's sister, tells her brother that Eileen is falling in love with him. One evening Alixe calls at Selwyn's rooms and a stormy scene ensues. Her husband hears of this visit and threatens Alixe into allowing Gerald to gamble again at the Ruthven house. Selwyn's business partner, Neergard, plans a real estate deal so questionable that Selwyn resigns from the firm. Neergard uses Gerald in an effort to force himself into society. Gerald's dissipation becomes notorious. Selwyn warns him to reform and is insulted by the lad.

CHAPTER VII.

(Continued.)

Errands and Letters.

"I WILL let them alone if you will," said Selwyn, halting. "I can't stand by and see you exploited and used and perverted. Will you give me one chance to talk it over, Gerald?"

"No, I won't!" returned Gerald hotly; "I'll stand for my friends every time! There's no treachery in me!"

"You are not standing by me very fast," said the elder man gently.

"I said I was standing by my friends!" repeated the boy.

"Very well, Gerald; but it's at the expense of your own people, I'm afraid."

"That's my business, and you're not one of 'em!" retorted the boy, infuriated; "and you won't be, either, if I can prevent it, no matter whether people say that you're engaged to her"——

"What!" whispered Selwyn, wheeling like a flash. The last vestige of color had fled from his face, and Gerald caught his breath, almost blinded by the blaze of fury in the elder man's eyes.

Neither spoke again; and after a moment Selwyn's eyes fell, he turned heavily on his heel and walked away, head bent, gray eyes narrowing to slits.

Yet, through the brain's chaos and the heart's loud tumult and the clamor of pulses run wild at the insult flung into his very face, the grim instinct to go on persisted. And he went on, and on, for her sake—on—he knew not how—until he came to Neergard's apartment in one of the vast West Side constructions bearing the name of a sovereign State; and here, after an interval, he followed his card to Neergard's splendid suit, where a man servant received him and left him seated by a sunny window overlooking the blossoming foliage of the park.

When Neergard came in, and stood on the further side of a big oak table, Selwyn rose, returning the cool, curt nod.

"Mr. Neergard," he said, "it is not easy for me to come here after what I said to you when I severed my connection with your firm. You have every reason to be unfriendly toward me; but I came on the chance that whatever resentment you may feel will not prevent you from hearing me out."

"Personal resentment," said Neergard slowly, "never interferes, with my business. I take it, of course, that you have called upon a business matter. Will you sit down?"

"Thank you; I have only a moment. And what I am here for is to ask you, as Mr. Erroll's friend, to use your influence on Mr. Erroll—every atom of your influence—to prevent him from ruining himself financially through his excesses. I ask you, for his family's sake, to discountenance any more gambling; to hold him strictly to his duties in your office, to overlook no more shortcomings of his, but to demand from him what any trained business man demands of his associates as well as of his employees. I ask this for the boy's sake."

Neergard's close-set eyes focused a trifle closer to Selwyn's, yet did not meet them.

"Mr. Selwyn," he said, "have you come here to criticise the conduct of my business?"

"Criticise! No, I have not. I merely ask you"——

"You are merely asking me," cut in Neergard, "to run my office, my clerks and my associates in business after some theory of your own."

Selwyn looked at the man and knew he had lost; yet he forced himself to go on:

"The boy regards you as his friend. Could you not, as his friend, discourage his increasing tendency toward dissipation"——

"I am not aware that he is dissipated."

"What!"

"I say that I am not aware that Gerald requires any interference from me—or from you, either," said Neergard coolly. "And as far as that goes I and my business require no interference either. And I believe that settles it."

He touched a button; the man-servant appeared to usher Selwyn out.

The latter set his teeth in his under lip and looked straight and hard at Neergard, but Neergard thrust both hands in his pockets, turned squarely on his heel and sauntered out of the room, yawning as he went.

It bid fair to become a hard day for Selwyn; he foresaw it, for there was more for him to do, and the day was far from ended, and his self-restraint was nearly exhausted!

An hour later he sent his card in to Rosamund Fane, and Rosamund came down presently, mystified, flattered, yet shrewdly alert and prepared for anything since the miracle of his coming justified such preparation.

"Why in the world," she said with a flushed gayety perfectly genuine, "did you ever come to see me? Will you please sit here, rather near me?—or I shall not dare believe that you are that same Captain Selwyn who once was so deliciously rude to me at the Minister's dance."

"Was there not a little malice—just a very little—on your part to begin it?" he asked, smiling.

"Malice? Why? Just because I wanted to see how you and Alixe Ruthven would behave when thrust into each other's arms? Oh, Captain Selwyn—what a harmless little jest of mine to evoke all that bitterness you so smilingly poured out on me! * * * But I forgave you; I'll forgive you more than that—if you ask me. Do you know"—and she laid her small head on one side and smiled at him out of her pretty doll's eyes—"do you know that there are very few things I might not be persuaded to pardon you? Perhaps"—with laughing audacity—"there are not any at all. Try, if you please."

"Then you surely will forgive me for what I have come to ask you," he said lightly. "Won't you?"

"Yes," she said, her pink-and-white prettiness challenging him from every delicate feature—"yes—I will pardon you—on one condition."

"And what is that, Mrs. Fane?"

"That you are going to ask me something quite unpardonable!" she said with a daring little laugh. "For if it's anything less improper than an impropriety I won't forgive you. Besides, there'd be nothing to forgive. So please begin, Capt. Selwyn."

"It's only this," he said; "I am wondering whether you would do anything for me?"

"Anything! Merci! Isn't that extremely general, Capt. Selwyn? But you never can tell; ask me."

So he bent forward, his clasped hands between his knees, and told her very earnestly of his fears about Gerald, asking her to use her undoubted influence with the boy to shame him from the card-tables, explaining how utterly disastrous to him and his family his present course was.

"He is very fond of you, Mrs. Fane—and you know how easy it is for a boy to be laughed out of excesses by a pretty woman of experience. You see I am desperately put to it or I would never have ventured to trouble you"——

"I see," she said, looking at him out of eyes bright with disappointment.

"Could you help us, then?" he asked pleasantly.

"Help us, Capt. Selwyn? Who is the 'us,' please?"

"Why, Gerald and me—and his family," he added, meeting her eyes. The eyes began to dance with malice.

"His family," repeated Rosamund; "that is to say, his sister, Miss Erroll. His family, I believe, ends there; does it not?"

"Yes, Mrs. Fane."

"I see. Miss Erroll is naturally worried over him. But I wonder why she did not come to me herself instead of sending you as her errant ambassador?"

"Miss Erroll did not send me," he said flushing up. And looking steadily into the smiling doll's face confronting him, he knew again that he had failed.

"I am not inclined to be very much flattered after all," said Rosamund. "You should have come on your own errand, Capt. Selwyn, if you expected a woman to listen to you. Did you not know that?"

"It is not a question of errands or of flattery," he said wearily; "I thought you might care to influence a boy who is headed for serious trouble—that is all, Mrs. Fane."

She smiled: "Come to me on your own errand—for Gerald's sake, for anybody's sake—for your own, preferably, and I'll listen. But don't come to me on another woman's errands, for I won't listen—even to you."

"I have come on my own errand!" he repeated coldly. "Miss Erroll knew nothing about it, and shall not hear of it from me. Can you not help me, Mrs. Fane?"

But Rosamund's rose-china features had hardened into a polished smile, and Selwyn stood up, wearily, to make his adieux.

But as he entered his hansom before the door he knew the end was not yet, and once more he set his face toward the impossible; and once more the hansom rolled away over the asphalt, and once more it stopped, this time before the house of Ruthven.

Every step he took now was taken through sheer force or will and in her service, because had it been now only for Gerald's sake he knew he must have weakened, and properly, perhaps, for a man owes something to himself. But what he was now doing was for a young girl who trusted him with all the fervor and faith of her heart and soul, and he could spare himself in nowise if, in his turn, he responded heart and soul to the solemn appeal.

Mr. Ruthven, it appeared, was at home and would receive Capt. Selwyn in his own apartment.

Which he did—after Selwyn had been seated for twenty minutes—strolling in clad only in silken lounging clothes, and belting about his waist, as he entered, the sash of a kimono, stiff with gold.

His greeting was a pallid stare; but, as Selwyn made no motion to rise, he lounged over to a couch and, half reclining among the cushions, shot an insolent glance at Selwyn, then yawned and examined the bangles on his wrist.

After a moment Selwyn said: "Mr. Ruthven, you are no doubt surprised that I am here"——

"I'm not surprised if it's my wife you've come to see," drawled Ruthven. "If I'm the object of your visit, I confess to some surprise—as much as the visit is worth, and no more."

The vulgarity of the insult under the man's own roof scarcely moved Selwyn to any deeper contempt, and certainly not to anger.

"I did not come here to ask a favor of you," he said coolly, "for that is out of the question, Mr. Ruthven. But I came to tell you that Mr. Erroll's family has forbidden him to continue his gambling in this house and in your company anywhere or at any time."

"Most extraordinary," murmured Ruthven, passing his ringed fingers over his minutely shaven face—that strange face of a boy hardened by the depravity of ages.

"So I must request you," continued Selwyn, "to refuse him the opportunity of gambling here. Will you do it—voluntarily?"

"No."

"Then I shall use my judgment in the matter."

"And what may your judgment in the matter be?"

"I have not yet decided; for one thing I might enter a complaint with the police that a boy is being morally and materially ruined in your private gambling establishment."

"Is that a threat?"

"No. I will act, not threaten."

"Ah," drawled Ruthven, "I may do the same the next time my wife spends the evening in your apartment."

"You lie," said Selwyn in a voice made low by surprise.

"Oh, no, I don't. Very chivalrous of you—quite proper for you to deny it like a gentleman—but useless quite useless. So the less said about invoking the law, the better for—some people. You'll agree with me, I dare say. * * * And now, concerning your friend, Gerald Erroll—I have not the slightest desire to see him play cards. Whether or not he plays is a matter perfectly indifferent to me, and you had better understand it. But if you come here demanding that I arrange my guest-lists to suit you, you are losing time."

Selwyn, almost stunned at Ruthven's knowledge of the episode in his rooms, had risen as he gave the man the lie direct.

(To Be Continued.)